



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE**  
**FELON SENTENCED FOR POSSESSION OF FIREARM**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a felon was sentenced in federal court today for illegally possessing a firearm. Today's sentencing is part of Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

**Cornelius R. Banks**, 22, who is homeless, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright this morning to eight years and four months in federal prison without parole.

On Dec. 11, 2003, **Banks** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Banks** admitted that he was in possession of a High-Point .380 caliber handgun on Oct. 24, 2003. Under federal statutes, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Banks** has a 2001 criminal felony conviction for sale of a controlled substance and a 2000 criminal felony conviction for burglary and stealing.

**Banks** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Nov. 4, 2003, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stefan C. Hughes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

**Project Ceasefire**

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms. Project Ceasefire has resulted in federal charges against 599 defendants, and convictions against 511 of those defendants, including 482 who pleaded guilty and 28 who were convicted at trial. A total of 453 of the

convicted defendants have been sentenced and another 58 convicted defendants are awaiting sentencing hearings.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)